

**Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee
(SSTMD AC) Meeting Summary
June 11, 2009**

Item 1, 2 - Introductions, Review of Minutes: Vice Chair Charles Segerman chaired the meeting in Jim Polk's absence. Members and guest introduced themselves. April and May minutes reviewed and approved with changes to April minutes.

Item 3 - Chair's Comments: Mr. Segerman commented on the Purple Line. He noted that although the previous consensus of the SSTMD AC was on overall funding for the Purple line, now that the funding is a reality, perhaps the focus of future meetings needs to be on the details of how the Purple Line should be built.

The county has endorsed the Medium Investment LRT Alignment design which runs the line through Wayne Avenue, Bonifant Street and stop at the SS Library. Then continue on the surface down Wayne Street instead of underground. There is a continuing controversy regarding the tunneling option. Residents on Wayne Avenue prefer that the train run underground to minimize disruption to the neighborhood.

Item 4 -Update on Bills 20-09 & 21-09: Chris Gillis, Aid to Councilmember George Leventhal, said Council has just finished with the budget approvals and Mr. Leventhal's proposed legislation will be discussed at the Management and Fiscal Policy (MFP) work session at 2 pm Monday, June 29th.

Mr. Gillis will forward Mr. Leventhal's response to the May 14th Advisory Committee letter to Mr. Carlson, who will forward to all members of the committee. Mr. Gillis will also see that the response is televised. No one thus far from County Council has signed on in favor of Mr. Leventhal's resolutions.

Ms. Brecher stated that the MFP work session is open to the public but are not usually forums in which public input is accepted.

A member commented to Mr. Gillis that the TMD Advisory Committee meetings represent a dialog between citizens and their government, providing a greater voice for the business community and allowing transparency. The committee should be saved instead of eliminated because it reinforces confidence in government.

Mr. Gillis reiterated the position he outlined at the May meeting, that Mr. Leventhal's primary reason for introducing the resolution is to save money and consolidate overlapping functions with the Citizens Advisory Board, the Urban District and TMD Advisory Committee. Also, Mr. Leventhal has said that because of the many different opinions from the various boards and committees, it was sometimes difficult to discern where to stand on transportation issues.

Edward Fugol said (in reference to board overlap) that the boards and committees have executive authority, thus serving as a liaison between the community and the local government.

The boards and committees have different opinions because they represent different constituencies and each need a voice.

Andrew Wexler stated that the cost of running the SSTMD AC is not an issue because the space is donated, board members volunteer their time and County employees who lend staff time to the committee do so as a part of their job descriptions.

Mr. Gillis was asked why the **Mr. Leventhal** believes that having less information from the community is preferable to having more. **Mr. Gillis** said he would relay the question to **Mr. Leventhal**.

Samantha Mazo said that transparency in business relationships with County Council helps avoid suspicion of favoritism between businesses and the Council. The SSTMD AC keeps a balance, and the differing opinions from the boards and committees also help give Council more transparency into the business community.

Mr. Segerman noted that SSTMD AC conducts 1 ½ hour long meetings devoted to exclusively to transportation and pedestrian safety issues in the Silver Spring CBD. The Citizens Advisory Board, by contrast, has one hour meetings during which time transportation plus other issues are discussed. This does not provide adequate time to fully discuss transportation. Therefore, eliminating the SSTMD AC will deprive the community of a valuable forum for discussing transportation issues and communicating with the County Executive and other agencies.

Sgt. Harmon said that because planners are centralizing development near mass transit hubs, such as Silver Spring, the committee's focus on transportation issues helps the Silver Spring urban district handle traffic congestion and pedestrian safety issues related to this on-going development.

Mr. Carlson added that the SSTMD AC provides regular input to the Transit Center Interim Operating Site (IOS) Operations Group. Attendance at the Operations Group meetings helps maintain a vital link to the residence and business community members that serve on the SSTMD AC.

Sande Brecher added that, as operators of the Silver Spring TMD, The County Department of Transportation also relies on information from the committee.

Mr. Gillis reiterated that **Mr. Leventhal's** actions are not personal and are based on Committee Evaluation Review Board (CERB) 2004 recommendations.

Mr. Segerman stated that no changes were made in 2004 and that changes envisioned are more problematic because the Silver Spring TMD is one of the largest urban areas in the County.

Mr. Wexler said that he does think there could be better communication between the SSTMD AC and the Citizens Advisory Board. He has attended their committee meetings, as well as the Pedestrian and Transportation subcommittees, both of which support the continuation of the SSTMD AC.

Mr. Wexler asked if the letter to **Mr. Leventhal** will be made available to all Council members. **Mr. Gillis** said other council members have received a copy.

Mr. Brecher said that the Citizens Advisory Board and the SSTMD AC meet at different times. She also suggested that the Council look at having a provision creating an official liaison, because of the proscription against people serving on more than one County board or committee.

Mr. Wexler said that we can attend other committee meetings informally. [The County's board and committee meetings are open to the public under the *Maryland Open Meeting Act*; some exceptions apply.]

Michael Price added that Discovery sees the committee as a way to have up-to-date information about transportation concerns, so they are glad to host the committee. It is no problem to provide space and refreshments. Discovery benefits from the meetings because all information is disseminated to its 2,000 employees who are affected by issues in the TMD.

Item 5 - updates: TMD/DOT/Police/Other County Updates: **Sgt. Harmon** distributed a Major Arterial Traffic Citation Totals sheet showing the number of citations given for the year pointing out May as having the highest number of citations.

Sgt Harmon reported that **Jeff Dunkle**, the County's Pedestrian Safety Coordinator, hosted a kick-off meeting to implement a Pedestrian Safety Campaign for the Piney Branch area. The County is looking into better enforcement implementation measures. Community members agree that the current 45 mph speed limit should be reduced to 35 mph and speed cameras should be installed.

Sgt. Harmon stated there were 2 recent pedestrian fatalities. On May 31st at 10:15 am a 71 year old man was killed crossing Lockwood Drive because he could not make the crosswalk. An 87 year old man was also stuck in a Georgia Avenue parking garage by a doctor backing out of a parking space.

Sgt Harmon noted that it is difficult to see pedestrians crossing if you are in the 3rd open lane waiting at a stoplight and the pedestrian has not finished crossing the crosswalk. **Sgt. Harmon** read a letter from a County resident, who stated that it was safer jaywalking than crossing in a crosswalk because he has never come close to being hit by a car when jaywalking; however he has almost been hit when crossing in a crosswalk because drivers do not heed signage such as No Turn On Red. However, the point was made that jaywalking across a dark 50 mph road is dangerous because the driver does not have enough time to slow down. **Ms. Brecher** added that pedestrians should always watch for right turning vehicles at intersections.

Mr. Wexler will investigate if the IOS has improved light visibility at the corner of Colesville and Wayne. The No Turn On Red sign is small and difficult to see, especially at night.

Sgt. Harmon stated that street design engineering is effective at slowing vehicle speed. He added that there are inconsistencies in the speed limit laws. In some cases, there are different limits on the same stretch of road.

Ms. Brecher suggested speed cameras. **Sgt. Harmon** stated that the cameras can be used only with speed limits 35 mph and above.

Ms. Mazo stated that highway engineers are slowly becoming better with pedestrian safety issues. She also asked **Sgt. Harmon** about the relatively high increase in May citations reflected in the Citations Total sheet. **Sgt. Harmon** stated that even though there were fewer patrol cars for a week in May due to Police Week, May was the target month for the Click It Or Ticket campaign to enforce seat belt use. Georgia Avenue was a high activity area for citations. Also, more people with outstanding warrants were picked up during May.

Mr. Wexler said that there is a traffic innovation program at the University of Maryland that trains engineers in traffic design, specifically to move cars faster through intersections. The computer simulation models did not take into account crosswalks or pedestrians. **Mr. Segerman** stated that the program takes direction from Park and Planning, and they take direction from state engineers. **Ms. Brecher** stated that pedestrian safety and moving traffic are at times conflicting objectives in transportation design.

Ms. O'Steen stated that 48 mail and 2 online TMP Annual Reports have been received so far from employers in the TMD. Traffic Mitigation Plans for business are loaded in the system and a record of previous years is kept on file. When the companies fill out the Annual Reports they only need to provide updates or changes. There are a few minor glitches in the system. If an employer does not provide any updates because there are no changes, then the system does not allow the report to be sent. The Annual Report must be filled out with the same information as the original plan even if there are no updates.

Ms. Brecher announced that the proposed FY10 Ride-On bus service cuts were eliminated, saving existing bus service; however there are fare increases on express bus routes. The Super Fare Share program funding has been reduced, so there may be a waitlist for new employers.

Ms. Brecher explained that the County is requiring all employers new to the Super Fare Share program to use the \$30,000 subsidy cap amount in a year. This means that employers would have to file for the subsidies 12 times a year which averages out to \$2,500 per month. The monthly subsidies are to correct problems of projection errors from companies' different ordering patterns. **Ms. Brecher** asked for feedback on this issue from committee members who are employers. Members voiced no concerns over the change.

Ms. Brecher announced that *Bike to Work Day* was a success, with 60 percent of the registered participants showing up for the event. Montgomery County had 25 percent of the 8,000 regional registrants. Many employers donated food, materials and prizes.

Ms. Brecher said CSS would be sponsoring the First Annual A²CE Awards (*Advocates for Alternative Commuting Excellence*) for Silver Spring employers at Crowne Plaza on June 24th.

The A²CE Awards recognizes employers who have worked closely with Commuter Services to provide their employees with alternatives to driving alone. **Ms O'Steen** announced that the breakfast will be 8:30 am to 10:30 am and to advise her if an invitation has not been received.

Ms. Brecher said that due to budget constraints CSS is not doing the large event that is typically done this time of year (*Transportation Awards Ceremony*); instead, there will be five small events for each of the TMDs and one county wide. DOT Director **Art Holmes** and Transit Services Division Chief **Carolyn Biggins** will be in attendance for all events.

Ms Brecher also announced that the Friendship Heights TRiPS store will have a soft opening soon - hopefully by the end of July. The TRiPS store will provide visitor and tourist information, in addition to commuter-related items. Also the fourth annual *Dump The Pump* event will be June 18th. Dump The Pump highlights the cost of driving and encourages public transportation use.

Ms. Mazo asked if at a future meeting we could have Park and Planning go over Growth Policy changes with the board.

Mr. Carlson reiterated the issue of member absences, explaining that three consecutive absences or four total non-consecutive absences during the year will lead to removal from the committee. Members will receive written notices prior to removal.

Mr. Carlson also said he is still looking for employers to fill position vacancies, Large Employer (50+ employees) and Small Employer (less than 50).

A member mentioned that the IOS is having a major water main moved along Colesville Road later this month, which may cause some disruptions.

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 am, next meeting will be on July 9th.

Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee (SSTMD AC)
Attendance Sheet
June 11, 2009

Voting Members (12)			
Name	Affiliation	Present	Absent
Chamber Members (3)			
Samantha Mazo	Linowes and Blocher LLP	X	
James S. Polk, Chairman	Technology Service Corporation		X
Tom Collins	Atlantech Online		X
Citizens Advisory Board Members (3)			
Edward Furgol	Kemp Mill, Four Corners, East SS	X	
Charles Segerman, Vice Chairman	North & West Sector Plan Area	X	
Andrew Wexler	CBD Resident	X	
TMD Employers less than 50 employees (3)			
Julian Leidman (pending replacement)	Small Business Representative		X
Suvita Melehy	Melehy & Associates		X
Cathy Wilde	Solid Waste Assoc of North America	X	
TMD Employers with 50 or more employees (3)			
G. Michael Price	Discovery Communications	X	
Robin Goudy	Social & Scientific Systems		X
Vacant			
Non-Voting Members (4)			
Sandra Brecher, DOT Transit Services	DOT Director or Designee	X	
Shahriar Etemadi	M-NCPPC		X
Sergeant Thomas Harmon	Montgomery County Police	X	
Staff			
Terrie O'Steen	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Nakengi Byrd	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Jim Carlson	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Guests			
Shimeka Dukes	Attending for Robin Goudy	X	
Chris Gillis	Aide to Councilmember Marc Elrich	X	

S:\CmtrSvcs\SSTMDAC\Minutes09\SSTMD Min 06.11.09 nb jc.doc